

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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FOR EUR/SOV

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SUBJ: VOA PROGRAMMING ON USSR

REF: A. MOSCOW 17502 (NOTAL)

B. MOSCOW 17478 (NOTAL)

1. IN FRONTAL ATTACK ON THE VOA, IZVESTIA ON DECEMBER 22 SCORNFULLY DESCRIBES THE STATION'S COVERAGE OF THE US ECONOMIC SCENE AS A BIG LIE. UNDER THE HEADING "ON THE WRONG WAVE LENGTH: MISINFORMERS ARE CAUGHT RED-HANDED," A. ARTAMONOV GOES INTO DETAIL IN POINTING OUT THE VOICE'S ERRORS, BOTH FACTUAL AND INTERPRETIVE IN DISCUSSING THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE USA (FULL TEXT BELOW).

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2. SOVIET OFFICIALS HAVE RECENTLY IN PRIVATE (SEE REFTELS) COMPLAINED ABOUT THE VOA'S ALLEGED EMPHASIS ON ANTI-SOVIET MATERIAL. IZVESTIA'S ARTICLE, WHICH CONCENTRATES ON ONLY ONE ASPECT OF THE VOA'S COVERAGE OF THE USA'S INTERNAL SCENE, IS A WARNING TO BOTH ITS AUDIENCE AND THE USG THAT THE WATCHERS ARE LISTENING. PRESS ATTACKS ON THE VOA HAVE BEEN RARE AND FAR BETWEEN RECENTLY, WHILE SOVIET ATTENTION TO "INTERFERENCE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS" HAS RECEIVED NEW EMPHASIS. THE EMBASSY NOTES THE REPORTED PROTEST OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN CANADA AT THE ANTI-SOVIET TONE OF CANADIAN EXTERNAL BROADCASTS. ATTENTION TO, AND POSSIBLY REPORTING ON, BROADCASTS OF THE VOA, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY INCREASE.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: ON THE WRONG WAVE LENGTH: MISINFORMERS ARE CAUGHT RED-HANDED.

SHOULD ANY NAIVE PERSON GET ACQUAINTED WITH AMERICAN LIFE THROUGH THE RADIO BROADCASTS OF VOA, HE WILL GET A PICTURE OF A KIND OF "PARADISE." CLOUDLESS HORIZONS OF PROGRESS, CLASS, SOCIAL AND RACIAL HARMONY, A CAREFREE EXISTENCE AND SO ON AND SO FORTH.

LET'S LISTEN TO IT AND THINK IT OVER. "ABOUT 80 PERCENT OF AMERICANS ARE QUITE HAPPY WITH THEIR LIEF AND WORK AND BELIEVE THEY ARE HAPPY" -- SAY THE FALSE VOICES IN THE ETHER.

TELL THAT TO THE HIRED HANDS AT THE SUN-SCORCHED PLANTATIONS OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH, TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE BLACK GHETTOS AND WHITE SLUMS, TO THE "SECOND CLASS" AMERICANS -- THE CHICANOS AND INDIANS* TELL THAT TO THE ARMY OF 8 MILLION UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS AND TO THOSE TENS OF MILLIONS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS WHOSE INCOME DOES NOT MEET THE GOVERNMENT-SET MINIMUM*

BUT NO, THE VOA'S STATISTICAL EQUILIBRIUM IS NOT MEANT FOR THEM. WITHIN THE USA ITSELF PRAISING THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE CAUSES BUT IRRITATION. ON THE EVE OF THE NEW YEAR LEADING AMERICAN ECONOMISTS HAVE MADE PREDICTIONS WHICH ARE VERY UNSATISFACTORY FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICAN WORKERS. THE WASHINGTON POST POINTS OUT THAT 1976 WILL NOT RELIEVE THE COUNTRY OF THE BURDENS OF UNEMPLOYMENTS, INFLATION AND RISING PRICES. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LATEST DATA OF THE AGENCY FIGHTING POVERTY STATES THAT 40 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE IN PROVERTY.

BUT THE RADIO VOICE OF THE INFORMATION AGENCY OF THE USA (USIA) HAS ITS OWN UNDERSTANDING OF OBJECTIVITY. THE "VOICE OF AMERICA" PERSISTENTLY CREATES THE MYTH OF THE AMERICA WHICH DOES NOT EXIST IN REALITY. STATEMENTS OF THE VOA THAT THE "UNEMPLOYED ARE IN NO HURRY TO GET JOBS, PREFERRING TO STAY

AT VACATION AREAS," SOUND BITTERLY IRONIC.

ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL AMERICAN DATA, THE EXTREMELY RAPID INCREASE IN PRICES, IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER INFLATIONARY FACTORS, HAS CAUSED A RAPID DECLINE IN REAL IMAGES. FROM THE END OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR UP TO THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE PRESENT YEAR ONLY THEY HAVE DROPPED BY OVER 5 PERCENT. DURING THE PAST 3 YEARS REAL PURCHASING POWER DROPPED BY 11 PERCENT. ACCORDING TO THE US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, THE COST OF LIVING FOR A FAMILY OF 4 INCREASED BY 14.3 PERCENT BETWEEN MARCH 1974 AND MARCH 1975 AND KEEPS GROWING. RETAIL PRICES HAVE JUMPED BY 60.6 PERCENT AS COMPARED WITH 1967. VOA CLAIMS THAT THE US TAXATION SYSTEM IS BEING IMPROVED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS. SOME LAWS PASSED BY THE CONGRESS ON TAXATION ARE PRESENTED AS NO LESS THAN REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES.

BUT A CERTAIN DECREASE OF TEX EXTORTION FROM THE PEOPLE IS THE RESULT OF PRESSURE FROM THE BROAD WORKERS MOVEMENT.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THIS IS A STOP-GAP MEASURE, PLANNED BY THE ADMINISTRATION NOT TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF WORKING PEOPLE, BUT TO AFFECT SOMEHOW THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION, WHICH IS UNDERMINED BY DECLINING PURCHASING POWER.

AS A RESULT OF SOME RELAXATION OF TAXATION, THE AVERAGE AMERICAN SAVES ONLY FROM 50 TO 200 DOLLARS A YEAR, BUT A HANDFUL OF CORPORATIONS WILL GAIN 4 BILLION DOLLARS. BUT IN THE PAST MONOPOLIES NEVER SUFFERED FROM TAXATION, THEY ALWAYS WERE ABLE TO REDUCE TAXES USING DIFFERENT EXCUSES AND TRICKS. SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN SAYS THAT 38 PERCENT OF ALL AMERICAN CORPORATIONS DID NOT PAY INCOME TAX IN 1971 AT ALL. THE PICTURE IS UNCHANGED TODAY.

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LAST YEAR THE CONGRESS'S BUDGET COMMISSION STUDIED THE TAX RETURNS OF 20 RICH PERSONS AND FOUND MANY ABUSES. THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE SAYS: "HAD THE FACTS BEEN KNOWN AND MADE PUBLIC, THEY WOULD HAVE RAISED A NATIONAL OUTCRY..."

IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED AT THE SAME TIME, THAT TAXES STILL REMAIN AN IMPOSSIBLE BURDEN FOR THE AVERAGE AMERICAN, BEING MUCH HIGHER THAN TAXES IN THE USSR AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

PERSONAL INCOME TAXES IN THE US CONSTITUTE 33.6 PERCENT OF ALL TAXES -- THIS IS THE HIGHEST TAX IN THE COUNTRY.

ACCRODING TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, WHICH STUDIED TAXATION IN 23 WESTERN COUNTRIES,

DEDUCTIONS FROM THE SALARY OF AN AMERICAN WORKERS ARE MUCH LARGER THAN THOSE IN MANY COUNTRIES. THE AVERAGE AMERICAN WORKING FAMILY OF 4 PERSONS HAS ONLY 85 CENTS LEFT FOR ITS EXPENSES OUT OF EACH DOLLAR.

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC OPINION EXPERTS, WHO ADDRESSED THE RECENT SESSION OF THE CONGRESS'S JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION, STATED THAT GRAVE ECONOMIC SITUATION IS CAUSING DEEP PESSIMISM IN THE COUNTRY.

PUBLIC OPINION POLLER P. HART SAID THAT AMERICANS LOST ALL TRUST IN THE ABILITY OF THE AUTHORITIES TO TACKLE COMPLICATED ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THEY LOST TRUST BECAUSE THEY KNOW: THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION, JUST AS THE STATE ADMINISTRATIONS, REPRESENTS BIG BUSINESS, BUILD THEIR POLICY ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS AND MOODS OF THAT ALL-POWERFUL 1 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION WHOSE INCOME IS 8 TIMES HIGHER THAN THAT OF 50 PERCENT OF ALL AMERICANS.

THE DOMESTIC SITUATION IN TODAY'S AMERICA AS PRESENTED IN THE VOA'S PUBLICITY PACKAGE WITH THE TRADEMARK "MADE IN USIA" IS AS FAR FROM THE GRIM REALITY IN WHICH THE LEAWJ FOUND ITSELF AS NIGHT FROM DAY. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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